



House Rules Committee

31st Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Juneau, AK

House Bill 309

Sponsor Statement

House Bill 309 temporarily extends the time for which the Legislature can meet in joint session to confirm the Governor's cabinet appointments and appointments to state boards and commissions.

Under current law, if confirmations are not taken up by the Legislature in a joint session before the regular session adjourns, the Governor's appointees are considered to be declined. Current health guidelines would disadvise sixty legislators and additional support staff from gathering in one room, as per joint session requirements. Additionally, COVID-19 and related emergencies could easily prevent the Legislature from being able to meet voting thresholds for confirmations or prevent the scheduling of a joint session before the session's end.

In the event of the need to adjourn early due to COVID-19 or if social distancing measures prevent the Legislature from meeting jointly, HB 309 would allow the Legislature the option of confirming governor appointees prior to the convening of the 32nd Alaska State Legislature.

House Bill 309 maintains as much of the regular confirmation process as possible while allowing the Legislature the flexibility to safely meet at a later date to give this important process its due.